

REMARKS

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-3 and 6-9 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nicholson in view of Noboru et al.

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection in view of the present amendment and the following comments.

The present amendment merely further clarifies subject matter that was previously before the Examiner and therefore, Applicants believe entry and consideration of the present amendment are in order.

The claimed invention includes the hollow portion 31 which is formed such that the hollow portion 31 is defined by the block portion 14 (See Fig. 2 of the present application). Claim 1 has been amended to clarify for the Examiner that the hollow portion extends up to a position substantially near an end surface of the outer cylinder such that a radial outer peripheral surface and a side surface of the block portion directly define the hollow portion. Accordingly, the free length of the end portions of the hollow portion can be ensured to improve the durability of the bushing.

In contrast, the hollow portion 74 in the Noboru reference is not defined by the block portion 78. Instead, the hollow portion 74 extends circumferentially to simply surround the block portion 78, as admitted by the Examiner - See line 11 of page 3 of the Office Action. Unlike the claimed invention, the hollow portion 74 of Noboru is not defined by the block portion 78. In Noboru, the mount 10 needs to have a larger spring constant in its axial direction than in the vertical

direction of the vehicle. If the hollow portion 74 is configured to define the block portion, as in the claimed invention, the volume of rubber would be reduced so that the spring constant with respect to the vertical direction of the vehicle would be decreased. The mount 10 that is disclosed in Noboru is provided with the hollow portion to ensure the spring constant in the vertical direction of the vehicle. In other words, Noboru is directed to a different technical concept than that of the claimed invention.

Even when one skilled in the art is motivated to combine the Nicholson reference with the Noboru reference, such combination does not result in the hollow portion as recited in the present invention because both Nicholson and Noboru fail to disclose or suggest such hollow portion. In other words, the rejection is improper because the references fail to teach or suggest all of the claim limitations and thus fail to meet the requirement for establishing a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

Reconsideration and allowance of the claims, as amended, are earnestly solicited.

~~Respectfully submitted,~~

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